



Keep your home free of pests and unwanted critters

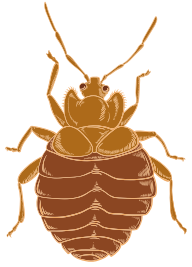
Keeping your home free of pests and unwanted critters is important to your health and safety. From roof rats to scorpions, this guide will give you information on what to do to keep your home pest-free. Unwanted guests can be discouraged by creating an unwelcome atmosphere.

www.tempe.gov/pests

480-350-4311

General guidelines to keep pests out of the house

- Screen all openings with 20-mesh screen
- Install door sweeps and repair thresholds
- Make sure door seals are in good shape
- Fill any cracks around doors, windows and use silicone seal on openings
- Seal utility openings or screen them
- Repair leaky piping to reduce water supplies
- Install ¼ inch wire mesh around vents in the attic, roof, chimney and crawl space vents
- Store food in airtight storage containers to avoid attracting ants
- Don't leave food crumbs in your sink or in pet food dishes
- Prune trees and shrubs away from the house
- Remove leaves and grass clippings from near the foundation
- Clean the roof gutters
- Pest-proof your compost bin
- Encourage birds and bats – they will eat bugs



BED BUGS

Since 2008, the number of bedbug cases in Maricopa County has grown by more than 300 percent. Bedbugs go wherever large groups of people are. They are most commonly found in hotels, apartments, schools and other public buildings. They hitch rides in backpacks, in suitcases, briefcases and in any other fabric items. Bed bugs do not cause disease, but their bites can cause large itchy areas on the skin. They reproduce very quickly and can infest an area in a matter of days.

Prevention:

- Check hotel bed, draperies and upholstered furniture for signs of bed bugs before using them
- Launder all bedding regularly, including comforters and bedspreads
- Vacuum often, including your furniture
- Do not buy secondhand bedding or upholstered furniture
- When traveling, do not bring suitcases into your home and consider running clothes through the high cycle of a clothes dryer for one hour before putting them back in your closet

Treatment:

If you find bedbugs in your home, contact a certified bed bug exterminator to find out how to properly dispose of any items that may have been infested and then have the area or the entire home treated by the same company.



BEEES

While bees are a necessary part of the ecosystem, they can sting. Some people are extremely allergic to these stings.

Prevention:

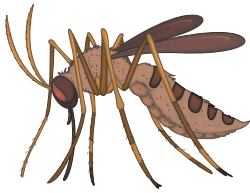
- Eliminate favorable nesting sites, such as overturned clay pots and cracks in walls
- Paint wood furniture and doorways that might be attractive to carpenter bees
- Eliminate unnecessary water sources and stop any leaks
- Add pine-scented cleaner to evaporative coolers to discourage bees
- Add two tablespoons of vinegar to outdoor waters that could be consumed by pets or birds to discourage bees
- Cover food when eating outdoors
- Don't allow citrus from trees to rot on the ground
- Close garbage can lids

Treatment:

If you have a troublesome hive, call a pest management company or beekeeper to remove it.

Swarming or Aggressive Bees

- > Place your hands over your face and look through your fingers to see where bees are coming from
- > Walk away from the bees
- > Do not swat at them – they will view you as a threat and swarm
- > If you are stung or are being chased by many bees cover your head and face with your clothing
- > Run into a building or until the bees have abandoned you
- > Do not dive into water as the bees will wait for you longer than you can hold your breath



Mosquitoes

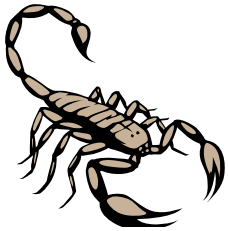
Beyond annoying bites, West Nile Virus is a very real problem. Mosquitoes can also transmit heartworms in dogs. Mosquitoes can be controlled by eliminating excess water.

Prevention:

- Remove all standing water
- Store boats, canoes and other objects so they do not collect rainwater
- Check rain gutters to be sure they are draining
- Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets
- Maintain swimming pools
- Keep mosquito-eating fish in outdoor ponds

Complaints:

Because mosquitoes can fly long distances, they are considered a regional issue. Maricopa County Vector Control may be reached at 602-506-6616 or www.maricopa.gov/envsvc to report problems.



Scorpions

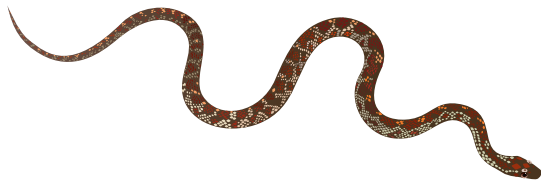
About 40 species of scorpions exist in Arizona. They feed on other insects, each other, and even small lizards, snakes and mice. They help regulate other pests. Their bites, however, are painful and sometimes can be deadly. Scorpion bites normally do not require medical attention for adults, but bites to children under 7 or infirmed people should be considered an emergency. Call 9-1-1. If someone not in the endangered group is stung, they should treat the site with soap, water and cool compresses. Elevate the bite site to heart level and take aspirin or ibuprofen for discomfort.

Prevention:

- Homes located near newly developed areas are more likely to have scorpions
- Homes located near fields, orchards and riverbeds are more inclined to have scorpions
- Scorpions like to live in piles of wood and rocks – remove these from your yard
- Don't leave shoes, clothing or other items outside without shaking and checking them before picking them up
- Place the feet of cribs inside open-mouthed jars and away from walls to keep scorpions from climbing the wood

Treatment:

If you find scorpions, check your home and yard with a camp light equipped with a black UV florescent bulb. Collection and removal to non-urban area is recommended as opposed to pesticides, which do not work as well.



Snakes

Most snakes are not poisonous but some are. Snakes usually do not cause any damage to your home or your garden, but the mere presence of them can be a nuisance to you, your children or your pets.

Prevention:

- Seal your home of cracks and holes
- Keep your lawn cut short and put a fence around your garden
- If you keep your dogs and cats outside there is a good chance that snakes will stay away. They dislike noise and ground vibration.

Treatment:

Hiring a professional to remove a snake is always the safest choice. If you want to remove a snake from your home yourself, consider these methods:

- Before doing anything, determine what type of snake is in the yard or house
- Use snake tongs or a snake hook and place the snake in a garbage can to transport it to a safe location in the desert
- Use a broom to push the snake into the garbage can



Coyotes

Coyotes are common in rural and urban areas throughout Arizona. Coyotes tend to travel and hunt alone or in pairs, but they can form groups where food is abundant.

Prevention:

- Remove outside attractions for coyotes and other critters – garbage, pet food, water sources and bird feeders
- Never feed coyotes
- Feed your pets inside, and never leave them unattended, especially at dusk and dawn when coyotes are most active
- Keep poultry, rabbits and rodents in secure enclosures
- Trim and remove any ground-level shrubs and branches that provide hiding places or den sites for coyotes or their prey
- Secure garbage containers and eliminate odors by cleaning trashcans with a 10 percent chlorine bleach solution

If you encounter a coyote:

- > Make loud noises
- > Wave your hands or objects like sticks and brooms
- > Throw small stones or cans
- > Spray the coyote with a hose
- > Only if necessary, use a commercial repellent, such as Mace, on bold animals that refuse to leave
- > Call Arizona Game and Fish if you have a continued issue



Feral Cats

Feral cats can leave fecal matter and cause odors. Some people are very allergic to the scent and the fecal matter can carry disease.

Prevention:

- Do not feed them or leave food out
- Trap, neuter and release them to curb future populations

Treatment:

- Trap feral cats and take them to the Maricopa County Animal Care and Control shelter at 2630 W. Rio Salado Parkway in Mesa or to the Arizona Humane Society in Phoenix. There are fees.
- Trap, neuter and release cats. Call the Spay and Neuter Hotline



Roof Rats

Roof rats are common in areas with citrus trees and vegetation. They can squeeze through any opening bigger than a nickel and can cause extensive damage to your home.

Prevention:

- Seal your home of cracks and holes
- Keep citrus picked up
- Don't keep bird feeders
- Ensure faucets and sprinkler systems don't leak
- Don't leave pet food out

Treatment:

- Set snap traps in your laundry room and garden shed baited with creamy peanut butter
- Place bait stations made of plastic, cardboard or metal with poison in them but be careful not to place them where birds or pets can get to them
- Call a professional exterminator who has experience with roof rats